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AUTHOR Rossell, Christine H.; Hawley, Willis D.
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ABSTRACT

Discussed in this report are the extent and causes of white flight from school desegregation and policy options for controlling it. After an introductory section, the report considers the extent of white flight from desegregating schools, taking into account the effects of suburbanization, interregional migration, and differentials in racial/ethnic birth rates on white enrollment rates in public schools. Both the implementation-year impact and the long-range impact of desegregation on white enrollment are considered, and distinctions are made between enrollment losses due to white flight out of the desegregating school district and those due to transfers of whites from public to private schools within the district. Following this discussion, the conditions associated with white flight are listed, and a tentative explanation of why desegregation may induce different patterns of white flight in various circumstances is offered. Methods that the schools, the courts, and the government at the State and Federal levels might use to reduce white flight are considered next. A final section discusses the costs of white flight in terms of interracial contact and the socioeconomic composition of the student and community population. (CMG)

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Christine H. Rossell

Willis D. Hawley

FINAL REPORT

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WHITE FLIGHT FROM SCHOOL DESEGREGATION: MAGNITUDE, SOURCES, AND POLICY OPTIONS

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Introduction

In recent years, the evidence has mounted that school desegregation has substantially reduced racial isolation in both the North and the South (Taeuber & Wilson, 1979), usually contributed to improved academic achievement among minorities with no negative effects on whites (Crain & Mahard, 1981), created conditions which can lead to improved race relations among students (McConahay, 1981), and, generally, has facilitated the integration of minorities in postsecondary education and into occupations in which minorities have been traditionally under-represented (McPartland & Braddock, 1981).

While the evidence of the positive outcomes of desegregation for children has become clearer and our understanding of the circumstances under which further benefits could be gained has grown (Hawley, Crain, Rossell, Fernandez, Schofield, Smylie, Tompkins, Trent, & Zlotnik, 1981), opposition to desegregation also has increased. This opposition has several well springs, including the change of power in Washington, but the issue that is most responsible for the changing mood is almost certainly a concern about white flight from public schools in response to desegregation mandated by courts and state and federal agencies. The conviction that white flight has undermined the logic of desegregation in many cities is reflected in the nineteen separate bills introduced in the United States Congress during 1980-1981 to prohibit either or both the Justice Department or the inferior federal courts from promoting or requiring busing to achieve desegregation. Representative of the sentiment underlying these bills to halt, practically speaking,

mandatory desegregation is the very first "finding" of Senate Bill No. 1647:

> The Congress finds that the assignment and transportation of students to elementary and secondary public schools on the basis of race, color, or national origin--leads to greater separation of the races and ethnic groups by causing affected families to relocate their places of residence or disenroll their children from public schools.

But the inevitability of white flight from desegregation has been overstated in the public debate. Indeed, the inevitability of white flight is so widely accepted that few school districts have sought to reduce flight other than to pursue metropolitan-wide desegregation plans. For its part, the federal government has not, either through its technical assistance efforts or through actions by the Justice Department and the Office for Civil Rights, pursued policies specifically aimed at reducing white flight. Magnet school and inter-district transfer provisions of the Emergency School Assistance Act had implications for the issue but these were not seen, so far as we can tell, as policies aimed at white flight so much as they were seen as alternatives to mandatory desegregation.

The stated policy of this Administration is to rely on voluntary methods of desegregating public schools. If it pursues this policy and courts and state agencies do not require mandatory desegregation, white flight from desegregation will probably cease to be a significant public issue. If all of this occurs, this report will be, of course, irrelevant. But, at least until the Congress prohibits them from doing so and the U.S. Supreme Court upholds such legislation, federal courts will probably mandate remedies to <u>de jure</u> segregation. State courts and state agencies in several states are also likely to continue to insist on desegregating segregated school systems. Thus, the issue seems likely to be part of the public debate over school desegregation in the near future. Moreover,

to the extent that white flight does occur as a result of desegregation, it defeats in some degree the purposes of desegregation. Thus, white flight does seem to be a legitimate concern of federal policy.

In order to facilitate the development of federal policies and practices that might reduce or eliminate white flight from desegregating public schools, this report seeks to respond to three questions:

1. To what extent, if any, is white flight the product of school desegregation?

2. To the extent that white flight is the product of desegregation, what are the conditions which effect its magnitude and character?

3. Are there things that can be done at different levels of government to reduce white flight and, if so, what implications do these have for federal policy?

It is not possible to provide definitive answers to these three questions but some of the uncertainty and misinformation concerning the first two can be clarified. Because the magnitude of and reasons for white flight are unclear and because specific efforts to address the white flight "problem" are uncommon and less often evaluated, it will be useful to place the consideration of policy options in the context of a theory that might help in evaluating alternatives and developing further possibilities. Thus, part three of this report, which seeks to identify a range of policy options, begins with a tentative theory that might explain why desegregation may induce different patterns of white flight in various circumstances.

The Extent of White Flight from School Desegregation

There is no question that white enrollment is declining in many desegregating school systems. The question is whether this decline in enrollment is caused by desegregation. While most scholars agree that under certain circumstances, whites leave public schools in response to desegregation,

they disagree about the magnitude, especially in the long run, of such flight. Researchers do agree that desegregation is not the primary cause of white enrollment declines in most school districts. At least three demographic trends that are independent of desegregation affect white enrollments in different parts of the country: 1) suburbanization, 2) migration from the Northeast and Midwest to the South and West, and 3) differentials in the birth rates within different racial and ethnic groups.

The Suburbanization of White America

The term "white flight" was originally used to characterize the phenomenon of middle class, white suburbanization that has occurred since the 1950's. The suburbanization trend is a function of not just "push" factors, but also of "pull" factors. Indeed, the research suggests that the "pull" factors--the greater space, greenery, and lower cost family housing, low tax rates, federal suburban housing loan policies, and changes in production and transportation in the suburbs--are more important than such "push" factors as central city crime and increasing minority populations (Katzman, 1978). The initial, large, middle class suburbanization which occurred because of these "pull" factors in turn worsened the problems of the central cities, causing still more middle class families to leave (Bradford & Kelejian, 1973). Thus, middle class suburbanization resulting from "pull" factors contributes to middle class flight because of "push" factors. This suburbanization trend would have characterized all races were it not for job discrimination and suburban housing discrimination against minorities.

If the problem is not so much one of "flight" but of relative attractiveness, the comparative advantage of the suburbs could presumably be changed by federal incentives. Possible incentives range from housing and school tax benefits to urban renewal programs. We discuss these below in the context

of school desegregation policy. At the present, most federal policies provide disincentives to living in the central cities (see Orfield, 1979; Taylor, 1979).

Interregional Migration

In the 1970's, a relatively dramatic shift in population occurred among regions of the country. There are no analyses of which we are aware that identify rates of interregional out-migration from school districts in terms of the desegregation status of the districts. Nonetheless, it seems reasonable to assume that part of the loss of white enrollment in cities such as Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Boston, and Pittsburgh is the result of migration from these cities to other parts of the country in response to economic conditions or changing life style preferences.

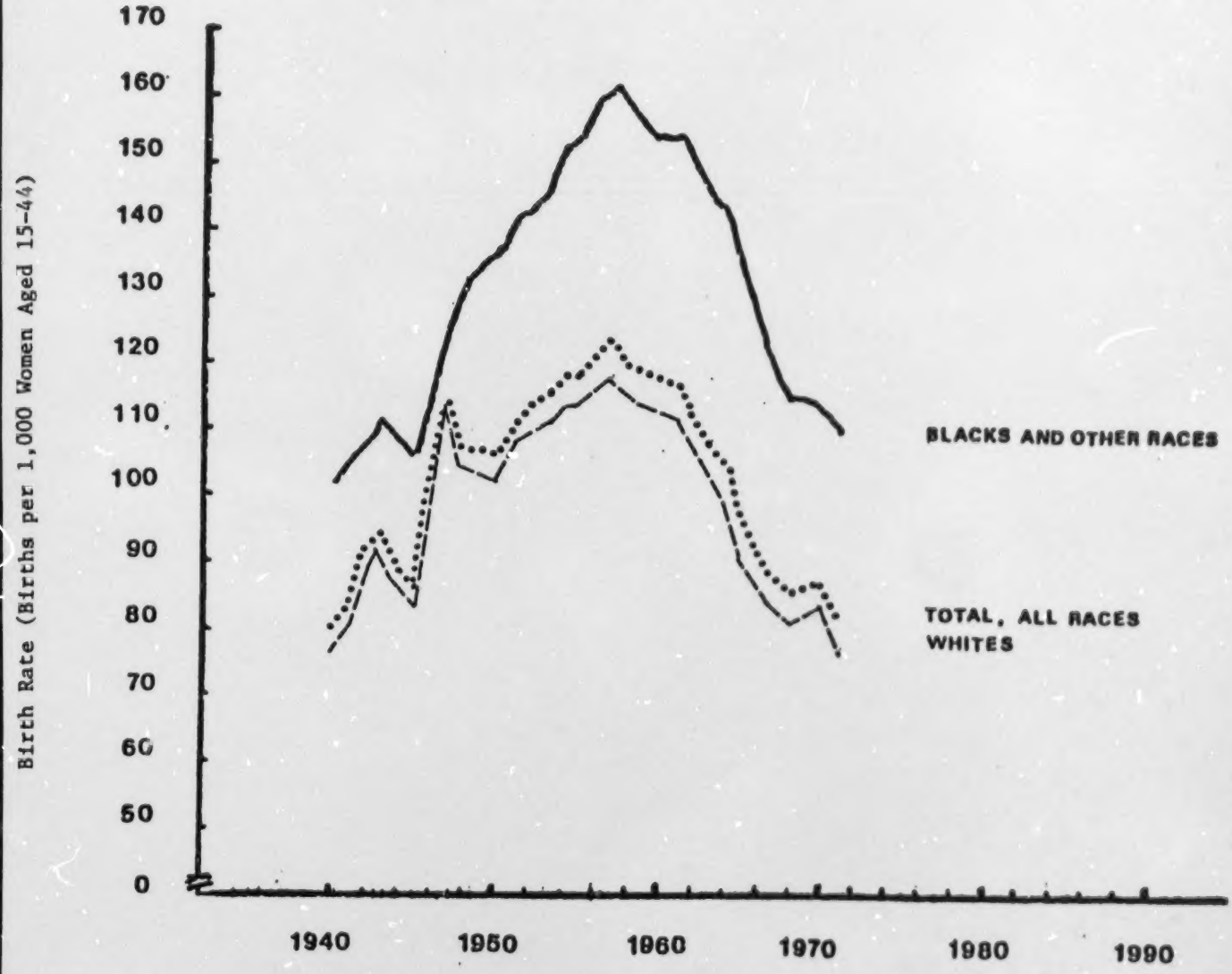
Differences in Birth Rates

As shown in Figure 1, all races have had declining birth rates since 1957, although the white birth rate is the lowest and its decline the greatest. The difference between black and white birth rates, however, has decreased each year (National Center for Health Statistics, 1975). In fact, birth expectations of young black women are almost the same as those of young white women and the birth rates of the two groups should converge in the future (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975).

Table 1 shows the outcome of the declining birth rate for all school enrollment, as well as public and private schools. There has been an annual white enrollment decline of almost 1% in all schools since 1968. It is now almost 3%. Although the public school enrollment decline for whites has been greater than the private school enrollment, the difference has been small.

FIGURE 1

Birth Rates in the United States, 1940-1971



Source: National Center for Health Statistics. Vital statistics of the United States, 1971. Rockville, Md.: National Center for Health Statistics, 1975.

TABLE 1

Percentage School Enrollment (K - 12) Change, 1968-1978

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
White											
Public		1.8	0.2	0	4.4	-0.8	-0.8	-1.2	-1.0	-2.8	-3.2
Private		-8.5	-1.5	-5.5	0	-5.4	-0.4	1.7	-5.6	3.9	-0.2
All		0.6	0.2	-0.3	-2.6	-1.3	-0.7	-0.9	-1.5	-2.1	-2.9
Black											
Public		1.8	1.3	3.5	-4.7	-1.5	4.3	-0.5	0.2	-0.6	-1.5
Private		5.0	8.1	-10.9	11.1	-2.5	-18.3	14.7	15.0	7.8	-7.5
All		2.0	1.6	3.1	-4.1	-1.5	3.4	0	0.7	-0.3	-1.8
Hispanic[a]											
Public		4.5	4.3	4.1	7.5	-4.9	10.1	4.1	-2.9	-6.3	1.1
Private		17.3	14.7	12.8	12.3	-3.4	47.2	-16.3	-11.3	30.4	-19.0
All		5.2	5.0	4.7	7.9	-4.8	13.1	2.0	-3.6	-3.4	-1.0

[a]Data on Hispanic enrollment is not available from 1968-1971, so this data was estimated from a linear trend analysis of the 1975-72 period. Since white enrollment dropped sharply in 1972 when Hispanics were counted separately for the first time, we assumed they were included in the white enrollment from 1968-1971. Hence, after estimating the Hispanic enrollment for this period, 1968-1971, that estimate was substracted from the white enrollment for those years.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. School enrollment: Social and economic characteristics of students, October 1978 (Current population reports, Series P-20, No. 335). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.

By contrast, the black total school population continued to increase (except in 1972), and did not begin to decline until 1975. Although the Hispanic population trends illustrate how much school populations based on racial designations can fluctuate from year to year, the trend seems to be towards less decline in recent years. Private school enrollment by blacks and Hispanics increased until 1978, when it began to decline, probably as a result of economic conditions as well as the declining birth rate.

Overview

Because of these different factors, we can expect for most northern central city school districts a "normal" (i.e., with no desegregation) percentage public school white enrollment decline of at least 4% to 8% annually, and for most northern suburban school districts, an annual public school white enrollment decline of about 2% to 4% (see Rossell, 1978a; Farley, Richards, & Wurdock, 1979). Some southern courty-wide school districts, because they benefit from northern migration to the South have stable or increasing white enrollment, in spite of the national decline in birth rate.

The percentage white enrollment decline, however, does not necessarily tell us anything about the racial balance of a school district, since that is affected by minority enrollment as well. Table 2 shows the total population percentages, by race, in central city and suburban metropolitan areas, and in non-metropolitan areas for 1960, 1970, and 1975. These data indicate that although the decline in proportion white is greatest in the central city, it is declining in the suburbs of metropolitan areas as well. Moreover, although the proportion minority is increasing at a faster rate in the central cities, it is also increasing in the suburbs of metropolitan areas.

The "normal" change in the white percentage of school enrollment in northern central city school districts should be a decline of two percentage

TABLE 2

Racial Percentages in Metropolitan and Non-Metropolitan Areas, 1960-1975

	Racial Percentage				Change in Racial Percentage		
	1960	1970	1975		Δ 1970-1960	Δ 1975-1970	Δ 1975-1960
Blacks and other Minorities							
Metropolitan Areas	11.5	13.2	14.6		1.7	1.4	3.1
Central City	17.6	22.2	25.2		4.6	3.0	7.6
Suburbs	5.4	5.6	6.6		0.2	1.0	1.2
Non-metropolitan areas	11.3	10.2	9.5		-1.1	-0.7	-1.8
Whites							
Metropolitan Areas	88.5	86.8	85.4		-1.7	-1.4	-3.1
Central City	82.4	77.8	74.8		-4.6	-3.0	-7.6
Suburbs	94.6	94.4	93.4		-0.2	-1.0	-1.2
Non-metropolitan areas	88.7	89.8	90.5		1.1	0.7	1.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Social indicators, 1976. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977.

points annually. For most northern suburban school districts, we would expect a reduction of less than one percentage point annually.

This should also be true for the South. As Table 3 indicates, those areas of the United States experiencing white out-migration, such as the Midwest and Northeast, are also experiencing black out-migration. Areas experiencing white in-migration, such as the South and West, are also experiencing black in-migration. The result of all this movement is that, in terms of racial balance, ultimately the North may not be as disadvantaged vis-à-vis the South and the cities vis-à-vis the suburbs, as it appears when one examines only white enrollment change.

Trends in racial balance over time suggest that public schools are also less advantaged vis-à-vis private schools than we would expect from examining white enrollment alone. As Table 4 indicates, the proportion white in the public school system has actually shown less decline over the 1968-1978 time period than in the private school system. If we examine the 1972-1978 time period (when Hispanics began being counted separately), the decline in proportion white in the public school system has been -1.7 percentage points compared to -1.3 percentage points in the private school system. In short, the trends which characterize the public school system also characterize the private school system.

Determining the decline in white public school enrollment resulting from school desegregation requires isolating the impact of policy from these long-term demographic trends. The analytical question addressed by the research on the relationship between school desegregation and white flight is: In any given school district, how much does school desegregation add to the already declining white enrollment?

TABLE 3

Net Intercensal Migration by Region,

1940-1985

Blacks (in thousands)	South	North-East	Mid-West	West
1940-1950	-1,599	463	618	339
1950-1960	-1,473	496	514	293
1960-1970	-1,390	612	382	301
1970-1975	14	-64	-52	102
Whites				
1960-1970	1,806	-520	-1,272	2,269
1970-1975	1,791	-1,240	-1,145	594

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census. The social and economic status of the black population in the United States: An historical review, 1790-1978 (Current population reports, Series P-23, No. 80). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979b; U.S. Bureau of the Census. The statistical abstract of the United States. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

TABLE 4

School Enrollment (K - 12) Racial Percentages, 1968-1978

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	Δ 1978-1968	Δ[a] 1978-1968	Δ[b] 1978-1972
Public														
White	80.1	80.0	79.7	79.1	80.0	80.3	79.2	78.9	78.8	78.7	78.3	-1.8	-6.8	-1.7
Black	14.9	14.9	15.0	15.4	14.3	14.2	14.7	14.8	15.0	15.3	15.5	0.6	1.3	1.2
Hispanic	5.0	5.4	5.3	5.5	6.0	5.5	6.0	6.3	6.2	6.0	6.2	1.2	1.4	0.2
Private														
White	93.5	92.3	91.4	91.1	90.2	90.0	88.9	89.4	88.8	87.5	88.9	-4.6	-6.8	-1.3
Black	4.3	4.8	5.2	4.9	5.4	5.6	4.5	5.1	6.2	6.3	5.9	1.6	1.7	0.5
Hispanic	2.3	2.9	3.3	4.0	4.4	4.5	6.6	4.8	5.0	6.2	5.1	2.8	2.9	0.6
All														
White	81.1	81.3	81.0	80.3	81.8	81.2	80.2	79.9	79.8	79.6	79.4	-1.7	-7.0	-2.4
Black	13.5	13.8	13.9	14.3	13.5	13.4	13.7	13.8	14.1	14.3	14.5	1.0	1.5	1.0
Hispanic	4.6	4.9	5.1	5.3	4.7	5.4	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.0	6.1	1.5	1.4	1.4

[a]Data on Hispanic enrollment is not available from 1968-1971, so these data were estimated from a linear trend analysis of the 1972-1975 period. Since white enrollment dropped sharply in 1972 when Hispanics were counted separately for the first time, we assumed they were included in the white enrollment from 1968-1971. Hence, after estimating the Hispanic enrollment for this period, 1968-1971, that estimate was subtracted from the white enrollment for those years.

[b]This estimate of change compares only blacks to whites, thus ignoring Hispanics for whom data were not available.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. School enrollment: Social and economic characteristics of students, October 1978 (Current population reports, Series P-20, No. 335). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.

The Magnitude of White Flight from Desegregation: Implementation Year

Virtually all of the research on school desegregation and white flight indicates that school desegregation significantly accelerates white flight in most school districts in the year of implementation if it involves mandatory white reassignments (see Rossell, 1978a; Coleman, Kelly, & Moore, 1975; Armor, 1980b; Farley, et al., 1979). The magnitude of white flight is a function of three factors: 1) the white proportion of enrollment in the district, 2) the proportion of whites reassigned to formerly black schools, 3) and the proportion of blacks reassigned to white schools. The first two factors are the most important. Racial tolerance appears to have progressed to the point today where black reassignments into white schools (i.e., one-way busing) do not significantly increase white flight from the receiving school except in school districts above 35% black. Even in those school districts, the effect of black reassignments is one-third to one-half that of white reassignments to formerly black schools (see Rossell, 1978a; Rossell & Ross, 1979).

Rossell (1978a), Giles, Gatlin, and Cataldo (1976), and Clotfelter (1981) find there is a threshold effect in white flight produced by the black proportion of enrollment in the school or school system. At 30% to 35% black, there is an additional increment in white flight and again at 40% black, but there is little increase between these points. Whites apparently do not make fine distinctions between varying levels of proportion black.

It can be estimated that, on the average, for every 20% of whites reassigned to formerly black schools in city school districts, the percentage white enrollment decline will increase in that year by an additional 9.6 percentage points annually over the pre-desegregation year percentage

white enrollment decline in districts with over 35% black enrollment. In districts below 35% black, white enrollment will decline by an additional 4.7 percentage points. The average desegregation plan (about 30% of blacks reassigned, 5% of whites reassigned, reduction in segregation of 30 percentage points) implemented in districts above 35% black results in the percentage white enrollment decline increasing by an additional eight percentage points above its pre-desegregation percentage white enrollment decline. Thus, if a 35% black school district has a pre-desegregation percentage white enrollment decline of 4%, it can expect a 12% white enrollment decline in the year it implements the above plan. In districts below 35% black, such a plan would usually result in an additional five percentage point increase above its pre-desegregation percentage white enrollment decline.

In county school districts (usually southern), the loss is about half that of city school districts (usually northern). The magnitude of white enrollment loss, however, is greater in southern districts, all other things being equal (Coleman, et al., 1975; Ross, Gratton, & Clarke, 1981).

There is little anticipatory white flight the year before implementation of a desegregation plan only because whites typically are not given enough warning (Rossell, 1978a). The average desegregation order comes down sometime during the year before implementation. The court order would have to be decided at least a year and a half before desegregation (which occasionally does happen) for it to produce anticipatory flight in the year before desegregation.

County-wide school districts have half the white enrollment decline of city school districts, because the costs of movement to the suburbs are increased the greater the number of surrounding suburbs included in the plan (Rossell, 1978a; Farley, et al., 1979; Armor, 1980b). In addition, the

costs of staying are decreased because county-wide school districts have a lower minority enrollment and thus need less white reassignment to desegregate their minority student population.

There is, in general, greater white flight produced by elementary than by secondary school desegregation reassignments (Rossell, 1978a; Rossell & Ross, 1979; Massachusetts Research Center, 1976). White parents are much more reluctant to allow their younger children to be bused across town to a minority school than their older children, although research indicates it is the younger children who are best able to adjust to their newly integrated situation. An exception to this finding is seen in Los Angeles, where junior high schools had greater white flight than elementary schools, but this is probably because grades 1 through 3 (which have the greatest white flight) were excluded from the desegregation plan, as were grades 9 through 12.

Two case studies contradict each other with respect to whether there is a difference in the white flight produced by white reassignment to Hispanic schools as opposed to white reassignment to black schools. We would expect less white flight from Hispanic schools simply because in almost all areas of social and economic life, Hispanics are less discriminated against than blacks. For example, Hispanics have significantly higher levels of residential integration with whites than do blacks, and tend to have higher income levels than blacks, despite having lower educational levels.

In Denver, the white flight from black schools was almost three times greater than the white flight from Hispanic schools (Rossell, 1978a). In the first year of the Los Angeles plan, however, there seemed to be greater white flight from Hispanic schools than from black schools when busing distance and other factors were controlled (Rossell, 1981a). Los Angeles, however, may be an unusual case. The student assignments were announced so late that

many white parents did not know if they would be reassigned to a black school or an Hispanic school. Alternative schooling may have been found in anticipation of their child being reassigned to a black school. In addition, the continual influx of new Mexican immigrants and the media publicity surrounding gang warfare among Mexican-American youths may also distinguish the Los Angeles situation from others.

The Long-Term Impact of Desegregation on White Enrollment in Public Schools

There is still substantial disagreement over the long-term effect of school desegregation on white flight. The research which uses cross-sectional multiple regression to analyze post-implementation annual changes in white enrollment finds no long-term negative effect in most districts (Coleman, et al., 1975; Rossell, 1978a; Farley, et al., 1979). That is to say, short-term implementation losses appear to be compensated for by less than normal post-implementation losses. The problem with these analyses is that they average effects across school districts, or in the case of Farley's deviations model remove a systematic source of variation between the independent variables and both within- and between-district differences in white flight by adding it to the error term. Sub-sample analyses conducted by Rossell (1980), and Ross and his colleagues (1981) indicate that big city school districts with minority white school populations are likely to have continuing white losses in post-implementation years (although they are much smaller than in the implementation year).

There are three possible, but as yet unproven, reasons for less than normal post-implementation losses in many medium and small, as well as county-wide school districts. First, school and housing available in a metropolitan regionsare limited; if the slack is taken up in one year by greater than normal usage, there will be nothing available in future years for the "normal"

population use, hence that usage will be reduced. Second, after the controversy subsides, many parents who put their children in public schools may find that income constraints take precedence over their fear of desegregated schools. Third, city-wide plans may stabilize some racially changing neighborhoods by reducing and stabilizing the minority school population (see Schnore & MacRae, 1975).

Black Flight from Desegregation

There has been almost no research conducted on the determinants of black flight from desegregation. Rossell and Ross (1979) find black flight in Boston to be associated with factors similar to white flight, but only at the high school level. Black reassignments to white high schools in Boston resulted in approximately 20% of blacks not enrolling, on the average, every other year since the first year of implementation. At the elementary school level, there is very little black flight in any year.

Residential Flight or Private School Flight?

In determining the impact of school desegregation on white enrollment, it is important to distinguish enrollment losses due to white flight out of the desegregating school district from those due to transfers of whites from public to private schools within the district. School enrollment data shown in Table 5 indicate that the proportion of white students enrolled in public schools has actually increased from 1968 to 1978. From 1972 to 1978, there has been only a small change (although the signs are now reversed). Hence, at least nationwide, there has been no wholesale abandonment of the public school system as some observers have claimed.

Because there has been no nationwide abandonment of the public school system, however, does not mean there will be no flight to private schools when a particular school district desegregates. Unfortunately, most of the

TABLE 5

Private and Public Proportions of White School Enrollment (K - 12), 1968-1978

Schools	Δ 1968-1978	Δ 1972-1978	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
Public	1.6	-0.5	86.6	87.8	87.9	88.4	88.7	89.1	89.1	88.8	89.2	88.5	88.2
Private	-1.5	0.5	13.3	12.2	12.1	11.5	11.3	10.9	10.9	11.2	10.8	11.4	11.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. School enrollment: Social and economic characteristics of students, October 1978 (Current population reports, Series P-20, No. 335). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979.

comparative, aggregate analyses of the effect of desegregation on white enrollment are unable to separate white flight characterized by the transfer of students to private schools from that characterized by the movement of families outside the district. There are, however, five case studies of four school districts which are able to distinguish the two phenomena through survey sampling techniques or a housing market analysis.

In these districts, it appears that there has been little residential relocation in response to school desegregation. Three of the studies are of two county-wide plans (Lord, 1975; McConahay & Hawley, 1977; Cunningham, Husk, & Johnson, 1978), so this finding should not be surprising. We would expect large metropolitan school districts to have less residential out-migration in response to school desegregation if only because the costs of moving are so high--finding housing outside the district is difficult and the distance from one's workplace is greatly increased. The two studies of central city school districts--Orfield's (1978) study of Los Angeles and Estabrook's (1980) analysis of Boston--also indicate more white flight to private schools than to the suburbs. Orfield (1978) found little suburban white flight in his analysis of the Los Angeles housing market in 1978. Los Angeles, however, is geographically one of the largest central city school districts in the United States. Estabrook's analysis of Boston--a much smaller school district in geographic size--indicates that of those white, middle class neighborhood residents who took their children out of the public schools during the two-year implementation of desegregation, 55% transferred them to parochial schools while 45% moved to the suburbs. Boston's greater white flight to the suburbs may also be attributed to its low rate of home ownership, since renters are more likely to move to the suburbs than home owners who have to sell their houses.

One should not generalize from the experiences of four districts and their changing patterns of enrollment warrant careful study. If much of the white flight that does occur is to private schools, the policies available to stem white flight are more numerous than they are when flight is primarily residential. Private school flight should be less damaging to a community than suburban flight, in part because the possibility of returning to the public schools is much greater, but also because these individuals will remain part of the community and presumably a part of whatever social change occurs. Moveover, flight to private schools has no negative effect on the tax base of the desegregating community although it may diminish overall political support for school taxes and bonds.

Explanations of White Flight

It is difficult to know with certainty why people flee from school desegregation. Most studies demonstrate correlation between conditions in school systems and the magnitude of white flight. Even surveys of opinion have real limits because people may find it difficult to express their real feelings to interviewers. For example, most whites will not express overtly racist beliefs though they may hold significant prejudices against blacks (McConahay & Hawley, 1977).

Thus, we must infer the cause of white flight from the evidence and if such inferences make sense theoretically and intuitively, they may provide a basis for policy development.

Riding the Bus Versus Neighborhood Schools

While we believe, for reasons noted below, that busing distances should be minimized, there is little evidence supporting the idea that many people flee desegregation because they can no longer send their children to their neighborhood school or because their children must ride the bus to school rather than walk.

In the last decade, the debate over school desegregation has often degenerated into a debate over "forced busing." Yet the term "forced busing" is a misnomer since no school district in the country forces children to ride a bus to school. The only requirement made by public school districts is that each child arrive at his or her assigned school. When that assigned school is beyond walking distance, parents not only do not object to busing, they actually demand it. Statistics on the large increase in busing in the years before desegregation support this. Busing children to school doubled during the 1930's, grew by 70% in the 1940's, and increased by more than a third between 1960 and 1970 (Metropolitan Applied Research Center, 1972; Orfield, 1978). By 1969, prior to the advent of court-ordered mandatory racial balance plans, almost 60% of all school-age children did not walk to school. Schools within walking distance were the exception rather than the rule--70% of elementary students and 80% of high school students lived more than 10 minutes from school (U.S. Department of Transportation, 1972). While busing has increased substantially over the years, the number of students bused for desegregation is only about 3% to 5%, and the number of students bused for more than 30 minutes each way has not changed much since 1969, a date that precedes most "forced busing" (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1979).

Parental demands for busing may stem in part from the fact that it is safer to ride a bus to school than to walk. A study by the Pennsylvania Department of Education found that children who walked to school were in three times as much danger as those who rode the bus. The National Safety Council's Accident Facts reported that boys were three times, and girls two times as likely to have an accident walking to school than riding the bus (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1973). It is also safer to ride a bus to public school than to private school. According to the U.S. Department of

Transportation (1972), children in private and parochial schools have to travel further than those in public schools, but it is the private and parochical schools which are the primary purchasers of the nearly worn-out school buses disposed of by public school systems.

As would be expected in light of the huge increase in busing in the last 50 years, busing per se does not have any negative educational effects. Nor is there any evidence that attending one's own neighborhood school has any effects, positive or negative, on achievement or a school's social climate (Davis, 1973; Zoloth, 1976).

The cost of busing is not an issue prior to desegregation. It is virtually unheard of for white parents to protest the cost of having their children bused to school in a segregated school system, nor do they protest the over 600,000 parochial and private school students bused at public expense (Orfield, 1978:128).

What parents who flee desegregation, particularly white parents, seem to be objecting to is not busing, but the mandatory reassignment of their children from the school they attend by virtue of living in that attendance zone to a school formerly of another race (which is sometimes closer than the school they have been attending).

Conditions Associated with White Flight

The data cited earlier in the report on the magnitude of white flight and cited below in our discussion of policy options allow us to identify conditions under which white flight is greatest. It appears that whites are most likely to withdraw their children from public schools or to never enroll them when:

1. Their children, especially their younger children, will be bused to a school in a black neighborhood or a school that has been predominantly black.

2. The black population of the district exceeds 30% to 35%.
3. The school district is surrounded by suburbs in which the schools are not desegregated.
4. The leadership in the district is indecisive and uncommitted or opposed to desegregation.
5. The media has focused attention on the conflict over desegregation.

These conditions do not exhaust the likely causes of white flight. They are, however, those that are most reasonably inferred from available evidence. On the basis of our interviews with experts around the country, we believe that the continuing uncertainty about where one's children will be attending school that is part of so many desegregation experiences is a crucial factor (Hawley, et al., 1981).

A Theoretical Bridge to Policy

The reasons for flight that we identify above mask 1) deeply embedded assumptions many whites have about the inherent inferiority of education in schools that are or have been predominantly black, 2) fears of interracial violence, and 3) the perception that desegregation removes the control they have over their child's educational and social experiences.

An argument supporting these speculations could be developed further but when data are limited and explanations likely to be complicated, it seems useful to step back from evidence and experience to theory. If that theory fits the data and orders intuition it may assist policy makers to identify options that have a reasonable chance of addressing the problem.

What is needed is a theory of white flight from desegregation that 1) defines the conditions which result in flight from desegregated schools and 2) provides some basis for reducing or eliminating such flight.

While it seems reasonable to assume that many whites flee from desegregation because they are prejudiced, this explanation by itself explains too little. Racism permeates our entire society, but only a minority of whites actually flee when a school district desegregates. Moreover, surveys indicate that overt racism is only weakly related to one's intention to leave a desegregated school system (McConahay & Hawley, 1977; Giles, et al., 1976).

Albert O. Hirschman (1970) in his seminal book about social and organizational change, has developed some concepts that provide a way to think about the white flight problem. If we take some small liberties with Hirschman's ideas, we can postulate that people will consider "exit" from the public schools when they perceive that the costs of seeking another option (private schools or suburban public schools) are lower than the costs they experience, or expect to experience, by staying in the public schools. In other words, exit occurs when the benefits of a move from the public schools outweigh the costs. The costs people experience are both economic and psychological, and it is perceived costs rather than objectively measured costs that shape behavior.

When schools are desegregated, many parents believe that the ratio of costs to benefits change. These beliefs appear to be based on one or more of five assumptions:

1. The quality of education their child is receiving is declining or will decline.
2. Their child will be subjected to greater physical violence or emotional harassment.
3. Their child will be exposed to and probably influenced by values dealing with academic achievement or social and sexual behavior that are not in the child's interest.

4. They will lose influence over their child's education.
5. Their property values will decline either because the value placed on the schools in their neighborhood will decline or because others will flee from desegregation creating a "buyers' market" for real estate.

The decision to act on an assessment that desegregation will increase the costs and decrease the benefits of sending one's child to public school does not depend wholly on the net costs people attach to sending their children to desegregated schools in the city in which they now live. It will depend also on:

1. Loyalty. Hirschman's concept refers, in this case, to the public schools. Loyalty leads some people who believe that desegregation will weaken the quality of education to stay in the city public schools. These people, particularly if they are middle class, are likely to become activists for school reform (in Hirschman's terms, they engage in "voice" and are "quality consumers"). If the "voice" they express is not responded to, these consumers may eventually exit.

Unfortunately, communities in which costs are perceived to be the highest often experience the greatest protest. As a result, school officials may spend all their time responding to opposition to desegregation rather than to educational improvement, thus encouraging the "quality consumers" to leave. Ironically, "loyalty to the public schools" may cause people who could afford private schools in central cities and who like living in the city, to move their residences to suburbia in order to enroll their children in "quality" public schools.

2. Options. Whether one can exit depends on the availability of private schools and suburban options. In Florida, for example, where

all public schools are county-wide and there has been no highly developed parochial school system, we would expect exit to be minimal. In the mid-Atlantic states and in some parts of the Midwest where parochial schools have underutilized capacity and where suburbia is easily accessible and socioeconomically heterogeneous, we would expect much greater flight.

3. Ability to Pay for Options. Exit from the public schools involves private school or residential relocation costs. One reason that studies often find a weak or negative relationship between favorable attitudes toward desegregation and willingness to stay in desegregating schools (McConahay & Hawley, 1977), is that those most opposed to desegregation often have low incomes or, if they are Southerners, belong to a religious faith for which there is no developed parochial school system. Such individuals are likely to feel trapped by desegregation and to engage in voice. When one is opposed to desegregation and without exit options, voice is likely to be manifested as protest against desegregation itself. Since busing is the tangible instrument through which desegregation imposes costs to opponents, it is likely to be the symbol of opposition to the larger school changes about which these persons are concerned.

This theory would be more instructive in understanding the magnitude of white flight from desegregation and the kinds of policies which will minimize flight, if we knew more about the factors that account for exit, voice and loyalty among the different elements of the population. Nevertheless, we believe that the framework just outlined facilitates a research-based identification of a range of policy options that might well reduce white flight. In general, such options should do one or more of four

things: 1) increase the costs of exit, 2) decrease the costs of staying, 3) increase the loyalty of consumers, and/or 4) increase the responsiveness of school systems to "voice."

We do not systematically assess the costs and benefits or the political feasibility of the options we suggest here. Such an effort is impossible with the available data. Moreover, we recognize that some of the ideas offered here are, within the present context and in their present form, clearly impractical. But, given the sense of hopelessness many policy makers express in considering what might be done about the white flight problem, it seems desirable to extend the potential policy agenda as far as possible. Some notions that seem unreasonable at this time may, in the hands of others and in other settings, become practical policy alternatives.

Policy Agenda for Reducing White Flight From School Desegregation

Policy Options for Local School Districts and Courts

Designing Desegregation Plans

We do not limit the alternatives discussed to those that are politically feasible or are likely to be favored by the current administration. The options outlined here seem to exhaust the general approaches discussed in the literature or by experts in the field. This section distinguishes between policies that are within the prerogatives of courts and school systems on the one hand and those that can be influenced directly by state or federal governments. The federal government can, however, influence local and court action indirectly through technical assistance, the dissemination of information, and the entry into legal actions in desegregation suits. Professional development programs are another vehicle through which federal influence could be implemented though the consolidation of some of these programs, including the Emergency School Assistance

Act, into block grants to states and localities reduces the possibilities for influence.

Voluntary Plans

Voluntary plans do reduce white flight, but for school districts with more than 30% minority (Rossell, 1979), and sometimes those with less than 30% minority (Larson, 1980), they produce almost no desegregation.[1] Most of the evidence thus leads us to conclude that if one's goal is actual desegregation, a voluntary plan is not a feasible option for most big city school districts. Desegregation plans, while they may include such voluntary options as magnet schools, must be mandatory if they are to substantially reduce racial isolation. A recent study of 24 large school systems indicates that mandatory plans are about four times more "efficient" than voluntary plans in achieving racial balance while differing only slightly in their apparent effects on long-term declines in white enrollment (Smylie, 1981).

Mandatory Plans with a Voluntary, Magnet School Component

The problem with mandatory plans, of course, is that they produce extensive white flight in the implementation year. Since we can estimate that, on the average, white reassignments produce almost three times the white flight of black reassignments, whites should not be <u>randomly</u> assigned to black neighborhoods if one's primary concern is to maintain white enrollments.

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[1] One exception to this general finding is that of Ross (1981). His analysis of Los Angeles indicates that the voluntary plan achieved greater interracial contact than the mandatory plan a year later because the latter was decimated by white flight. There are two problems with this analysis. First, the voluntary plan's success was undoubtedly enhanced by the threat of mandatory desegregation if it failed. Second, the mandatory plan was only a partial plan affecting grades 4-8. Nevertheless, as the presumed forerunner of a more extensive plan, it was immediately embroiled in political controversy and threatened boycotts, and chaotically implemented by a defiant school board. Hence the generalizibility of this study is limited.

One potentially effective option is a desegregation plan with a two-stage reassignment process. The first stage is voluntary and includes the creation of magnet school programs over a four or five month period in the pre-implementation year. All magnet schools should be built in minority neighborhoods. Some of them might be "fundamental" or "traditional" schools in order to counteract the image white parents have of black schools as unsafe and undisciplined. Surveys have shown that the single greatest educational concern of parents is school discipline (Golladay & Noell, 1978:53). Badly deteriorating black schools and if possible, the most isolated schools, should be closed in favor of maintaining schools near the boundaries of black and white neighborhoods.

The first stage of the reassignment process would then begin with the magnet school reassignment. The evidence from Boston suggests that there are enough white parents who are willing to put their children in schools in black neighborhoods to racially balance them, if these schools are publicized as superior schools, and <u>if</u> the alternative is mandatory reassignment to another desegregated school chosen by the school administration (Massachusetts Research Center, 1976; Rossell & Ross, 1979). It is important that this be done on an individual basis rather than on a school basis, as in Los Angeles. There, schools were asked to volunteer for pairs and clusters with the alternative being later mandatory reassignment. The problem with this policy is that when whole schools are asked to volunteer, rather than individuals, any given school may have enough parents who oppose this action, and as a result withdraw their children, to effectively sabotage any chance of racial balance.

After white parents are asked to volunteer for magnet schools in minority neighborhoods, the additional seats in minority schools can be filled

by mandatory reassignment of whites. Minorities can also be reassigned by the same process (i.e., they can either volunteer for a magnet school or accept the school district's assignment).

Curriculum

To reduce the perceived costs of desegregation, magnet schools should be made part of any mandatory desegregation plan. It also seems reasonable to offer college preparatory and advanced academic courses in all secondary schools in order to keep the middle class in the public school system. Offering college preparatory courses in some schools (e.g., magnets), but not others, can result in class and racial resegregation. The consensus of experts interviewed in a recent national study was that academically elite magnet schools might actually encourage flight for those not selected (Hawley, et al., 1981).

Enhancing the Perceived Quality of Public Schools

A key assumption behind voluntary plans is that parents will be attracted to "quality" schools (i.e., magnets). One problem with this assumption is that educators and parents have different conceptions of educational quality and both, especially parents, have only vague notions about what accounts for quality education. Nevertheless, the adoption of policies which support programs and conditions parents value should reduce their perceptions of desegregation-related costs and increase the benefits they attribute to public schooling.

Maintaining Smaller Classrooms. One belief that almost all teachers and parents share is that small class size makes for better schooling.[2] Since

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[2]A meta-analysis conducted by Glass and Smith (1979) supports this assertion. Classrooms that were smaller than 20 students showed increased in achievement with reductions in size.

enrollment in most school systems is declining and many teachers consequently face unemployment, a federal program aimed at retaining teachers in school systems that are desegregating could have positive educational consequences and might reduce white and middle class flight.

Maintaining Smaller Schools. Smaller schools are likely to be effective in achieving desegregation and equal status contact for several reasons. First, whites usually overestimate the proportion of minorities in a given environment and, probably, the more non-whites in that environment (i.e., the larger the school), the more they overestimate. Thus, white flight might be reduced in smaller schools simply because the minority proportion will seem smaller and less threatening than in a larger school.[3] Second, one way that unfavorable stereotypes are repudiated is by personal experience. Students are more likely to have interaction with most of their schoolmates in a smaller environment. Finally, discipline, which parents perennially see as the biggest problem in the public schools (see Golladay & Noell, 1978:53), is easier to achieve in smaller environments (Gottfredson & Daiger, 1979).

Implementation Timing

Desegregation plans should not be phased in over a period of time of two or more years if at all feasible, since doing so tends to contribute to greater white flight than would be expected from the extent of reassignment (see Rossell, 1978a). That is to say, with a two-year plan, as in Boston, there will be greater white flight than would be expected from the first year's plan in anticipation of future reassignments. In short, the more warning people are given about desegregation, the more white flight results (see also Armor, 1980b).

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[3]This may be why Rossell (1981) found less implementation year white flight in Los Angeles when whites were reassigned to smaller minority schools than to larger ones.

Busing Distance

Busing distance should be minimized in districts with the potential for the greatest white flight. At first glance, the literature may seem contradictory in its findings, but there is at least one important difference between the studies finding no white flight (Giles, et al., 1976; Pride & Woodward, 1978) and those finding an effect (Armor, 1980a; Massachusetts Research Center, 1976; Rossell, 1981). The former are of county school districts and the latter are of city school districts. Furthermore, the Giles, Gatlin, and Cataldo study is of post-implementation years, while the Massachusetts Research Center study and Rossell (1981) include an implementation year. Rossell (1981) compares the implementation and post-implementation years and finds a relationship between busing distance and white flight only in the implementation year. Parents who are willing to have their children bused a certain distance, or who do not have the means to withdraw their children in the implementation year, seem not to withdraw them later because the bus ride is too long. This suggests that the apparent contradiction in the research may simply be the difference between types of school districts (county versus city) or between implementation year effects and post-implementation year effects. It seems reasonable to conclude then that minimizing busing distance will probably reduce implementation year white flight in those districts and those schools where flight is likely to be greatest.

It is important to note that it is probably not the busing distance per se which causes white flight, but the busing distance to a desegregated school. The evidence indicates that those who flee desegregation and enroll their children in a private school have an average 70% longer bus ride than those who remain in the public schools (U.S. Department of Transportation, 1972; Orfield, 1978).

Sub-Districting

The evidence from an analysis of Boston's school system (which was divided into nine court-mandated sub-districts) suggests that it is inadvisable to draw inviolable sub-district attendance zones, particularly when the only residential area included in a single sub-district is a transitional one (Rossell, & Ross, 1979). Racially changing neighborhoods are stabilized only if stable white neighborhoods are also included in the attendance zone. The advantage of a city-wide plan with no sub-districts is that school authorities are able to redraw attendance zones and reassign students from all over the city whenever necessary to stabilize schools.

Providing Incentives for Housing Desegregation

Desegregation plans should exclude residentially integrated neighborhoods from cross-town busing in order to give families an incentive to integrate neighborhoods. However, it should be widely understood that the racial balance of those schools would be maintained by reassignments if necessary. Hence, if the proportion white enrollment declines in a school which is exempt from busing because of its integrated neighborhood, everyone should understand that additional whites will be reassigned in, or minorities reassigned out to bring the proportion white up to a stable level. Unfortunately, there is no agreement about what such a level is, though most observers believe schools that are majority black will not usually hold whites. In tri-ethnic districts, this standard could be relaxed if the Hispanic community involved is not very poor.

Since the size and number of integrated neighborhoods in a formerly segregated school system will be quite small, it may be necessary to give families an incentive to begin the integration process. This can be done by exempting from reassignment any student who moves into a neighborhood where he or she is in a racial minority. Many desegregated school districts have utilized both

these strategies. Pearce (1980) concludes after studying seven matched pairs of desegregated and undesegregated school districts from 1970 to 1975 (or later depending on the availability of data), that desegregated school districts had significantly greater reductions in residential segregation (using the index of dissimilarity) than their segregated pair. At the same time, the desegregated school districts do not appear to have greater increases in proportion black than their segregated pair.

Public Information

Since the greatest white flight occurs in the year of implementation, most of those who have fled are people who have never tried desegregation. Typically, these people do not know anyone who has experienced desegregated schools, yet they believe that the quality of their children's education will suffer when their schools are desegregated. The inevitable question arises--from what sources do they get their information? In most cases, the answer is the mass media. Although the media have a liberal reputation among those opposed to busing, researchers who have done content analyses (Rossell, 1978b; Stuart, 1973; Pride & Woodward, 1978) find the press tends to emphasize anti-busing protest, white flight, and interracial conflict as a product of desegregation. In addition, Rossell (1978b) finds this negative coverage exacerbates white flight. That is to say, the greater the negative coverage of desegregation, the greater the white flight.

If the mass media serves as the source of information on the costs, benefits, and risks of desegregation, then it is important that the school districts or a state agency provide the newspapers and local television stations with positive stories on desegregation and complete evidence on school performance, both pre- and post-desegregation, and with press releases about new and innovative school programs. This is a full-time job which requires

someone skilled in public information and marketing. Although the cost of maintaining such an office might be high, the benefits could be substantial.

As noted earlier, in many communities most of those who leave the public schools to avoid desegregation do not move out of the school district. School systems should maintain contact with these parents, identify their concerns, and provide them with programs and information that might attract them back to the public schools. Parent-Teacher-Student Associations can play a major role in such recruitment efforts, but the school district should also assign personnel to this task.

Civic organizations, with the support of school districts, could sponsor activities in minority neighborhood schools, with transporation provided, to familiarize white parents with these neighborhoods, and to dispel myths regarding the danger of passing through such neighborhoods and of attending formerly black schools.

It is important to constrain protest if possible because the available research suggests that protest demonstrations exacerbate white flight. Encouraging leaders to play a more positive role in desegregation controversies is one strategy frequently advocated as a way of shaping public reaction. There is no empirical evidence, however, that community-wide leadership has any influence on white flight and protest, except indirectly by contributing to the slant of newspaper and media coverage (see Rossell, 1978b). This may be due to the fact that desegregation is an issue area where there usually is no leadership from traditional leaders. The evidence suggests that if leadership activity is to be succussful in minimizing negative reactions, the activity should be at the neighborhood level (see Hays, 1977; Taylor & Stinchcombe, 1977; Hawley, et al., 1981). Thus, while it is clearly desirable to have community-wide leaders endorsing desegregation, pious

announcements from afar about the need to obey the law are not likely to be very consequential, particularly when anti-busing leaders are actively influencing opinion and behavior at the grass roots level.

Federal and State Policy Options

Facilitating Metropolitan Solutions

Metropolitan desegregation plans are more stable than city plans from every viewpoint. Nevertheless, the courts have been reluctant to order metropolitan plans except where there is a clear cross-district violation. Proving there is a cross-district violation is a laborious, time consuming task which few plaintiffs or defendants have the resources to accomplish. This is an area where the Office for Civil Rights could play a useful role. While it appears that the Office for Civil Rights and the Justice Department under the Reagan Administration will not pursue desegregation suits involving mandatory reassignments of any sort, in other times the Office for Civil Rights might have been able to collaborate in some cooperative efforts with the Justice Department. Together they might be able to create an ad hoc committee of lawyers, demographers, economists, sociologists, urban historians, and other experts who could collect and analyze data in critical, selected localities on real estate practices, local housing regulations, unnatural patterns of residential growth, and other instances of discriminatory practices which involve collusion between the city and the suburbs to keep minorities out of the suburbs.

The federal government could provide matching funds to states, or cooperating districts to support inter-district transfer programs that have the effect of furthering desegregation in the participating districts. The 1978 revisions of the now defunct Emergency School Assistance Act (ESAA) allowed such expenditures, but since districts had to choose between using

funds for these purposes rather than those of more immediate educational benefit, this option was not widely used. Moreover, Congress made it unnecessarily difficult to qualify for this money by requiring cooperation agreements to be excessively inclusive. As a result, the 1980 applications for ESAA funds by local agencies indicated no new interest in metropolitan cooperation. In 1980, Houston implemented, without federal support, a modest voluntary cross-district plan, but the amount of desegregation achieved by this plan is small. The National Educational Opportunity Act of 1979, sponsored by Congressman Preyer and others, would establish a separate inter-district program, but Preyer was defeated in the 1980 elections, and no replacement sponsor for the bill has been found. If the administration was interested in encouraging voluntary desegregation, it might revive such legislation.

Inter-district transfer programs, however, will probably have to be actively advocated and brokered by state or federal agencies if they are to account for much desegregation. Nationally based agencies (e.g., the Education Commission of the States or the Title IV Desegregation Assistance Centers) could provide technical assistance to such efforts. On the basis of past experiences, however, such assistance in itself will probably only reduce segregation by a few percentage points and should be seen as part of an array of programs aimed at stabilizing enrollments.

Housing and School Desegregation

The need for school desegregation is largely a function of the fact that housing is segregated. Housing policies which encourage racially mixed neighborhoods would facilitate desegregation and reduce incentives for white flight. Orfield (1979:42) notes that the housing and education sections of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department have been merged, and the Division is reported to be actively interested in combined school and housing

litigation. If this is coordinated with the investigation of metropolitan collusion discussed above, we might see some successful northern metropolitan cases.

In Louisville-Jefferson County, the Kentucky Human Rights Commission (1977) was able to promote housing integration by an aggressive program of publicizing the school attendance zones that families could move into to keep their children from being bused since children moving into opposite race neighborhoods were excluded from busing. Some white neighborhoods then began recruiting black families on their own because neighborhood integrated schools were also excluded from busing. The effect was substantial. Between 1974 and 1977, the percentage of blacks living in suburban Jefferson County increased by 68%.

Taylor (1977) suggests that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development should replicate the positive experience in Louisville by initiating an affirmative program to use Section 8 housing opportunities to residentially integrate school districts. Section 8 allotments are available to low and moderate income families in order to make up the difference between the amount of rent representing 25% of their income and the fair market rent charged in the private rental unit of their choice (although government inspected and approved). Section 8 guarantees are also available to builders in order to induce them to build low and moderate income housing by guaranteeing that enough families will be given Section 8 allotments to fill a certain proportion of the units and by subsidizing any vacant units (Bowers, 1980). Both of these programs could be used to enable minority families to move into white neighborhoods in school districts where integrated schools are excluded from busing (which gives whites an incentive to accept them). This would not necessarily entail additional expenditures because it could conceivably be

accomplished by a more rational allocation of funds already expended.

Financial Incentives for Living in Desegregating School Districts

It seems reasonable to assume that an important reason why whites leave racially changing neighborhoods or schools, or desegregating school districts, is that they are concerned about the racial stability of their neighborhood and schools and the decline in property values they believe will accompany desegregation. It follows then that one way to reduce white flight might be for the federal government to guarantee a fair market value for the homes of individuals living in integrated neighborhoods or having children in integrated schools. In effect, such a policy, which has certain characteristics of "impact aid," would be a federal assurance that desegregation would not increase the cost of sending one's children to public schools. In order that it not serve as a stimulus for additional white flight, however, there would have to be a stipulation regarding the minimum amount of time spent in the integrated school or neighborhood after desegregation. Three years might be sufficient. Although this would entail new legislation, it would probably cost little if 1) it failed to stem white flight in the short run, or 2) it was a successful policy. Even if whites moved after three years to a more segregated school system, the costs of this policy would probably be small since the depression of property values is greatest when white flight is greatest and that typically occurs right after desegregation. In general, the consensus among observers of desegregation is that property values tend to rise to normal levels by the third year of desegregation.

Providing Financial Incentives for Voluntary School Desegregation

Another possible option, which might also stimulate voluntary desegregation, is the provision of tax credits for those who have their children in desegregated schools. This is, of course, an expensive option which would entail

new legislation being passed by Congress. Congress, however, might be willing to pass such legislation if it were billed as a means of stimulating voluntary desegregation and thus freeing their constituents from "forced busing." The actual costs of this program might be offset by its impact on minority life chances and on the economic health of cities.

A less expensive variation of this idea would be to provide parents with a limited voucher that could be spent in either public or private schools if it resulted in increased desegregation. Since most parents believe that money improves schools, such a voucher might induce them to send their children to desegregated schools. At the same time, this would serve as an incentive for schools to recruit students whose attendance would reduce segregation since they would also increase the school's budget. This program could be either a state or federal program, but it would entail new legislation.

The Justice Department's recent proposal that the state of Missouri provide state university tuition credit to students who attend desegregated schools (aimed at encouraging voluntary metropolitan desegregation in St. Louis) might be useful if it did not rely solely on state funding and one state university system and was limited to areas with substantial minority student enrollments in precollegiate schools. Most states, including Missouri, have not been brokers for desegregation efforts, and even fewer have been willing to fund them. In addition, a plan aimed at college-bound students is by itself inadequate to accomplish much desegregation since only 30% of college-age students matriculate at any university, and an even smaller number do so at their state university or college. Such a voucher program (which is rather like the educational benefits given to veterans of the armed forces) needs to be federally funded and extended to all universities and colleges.

More importantly, it should be only one part of a package of programs if it is to be successful.

Encouraging Consumer Protection

It is probably safe to say that most parents who remove their children from public schools in the face of desegregation believe that the quality of education their children will receive in a private school is superior. To be sure, this belief may be a rationalization or a secondary consideration, but it no doubt makes both the desicion and the bearing of the financial costs easier.

It seems likely, however, that parents overestimate the quality of private schools with respect to the cognitive development of their children and the resources available to facilitate these and other types of learning. White flight might be retarded, and white return facilitated if schools of all kinds were required by states or the federal government to publish information about the range of resources (including teacher qualifications) and educational opportunities students have available to them, and the rates of progress during the school year made by individual students as measured by standardized tests. Some indicators on which the public schools might do better than private schools are pupil-teacher ratios, teacher salaries and qualifications, per pupil expenditures, and, perhaps, change in individual student scores over time. There is a belief among many parents that their children's achievement scores will go up in private schools and down in public schools. To date, there is no empirical evidence available that supports this belief.[4]

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[4]Although the latest Coleman report, Public and Private Schools (1981), argues that private schools are superior to public schools, it actually cannot demonstrate such an effect using cross-sectional multiple regression analysis of student achievement scores as it does. Any self-selection bias which

Requirements for the publication of such information could be limited to instances where tax exemptions are involved and even then they might be hotly contested in constitutional (and other) grounds. Nevertheless, private schools have public responsibilities and it is in the national interest to provide parents with adequate information upon which to base their decisions about how to education their children.

Desegregating Schools on the Basis of Workplace and Work Needs

It is estimated that half the nation's children under age 18 have mothers in the labor force (Waldman, Grossman, Hayghe, & Johnson, 1979). One important way in which desegregated schools might compete with private and suburban segregated schools would be to make themselves more attractive to these working mothers by providing all-day school activities until a parent comes home from work and/or by desegregating schools according to the parents' workplace, rather than their home.

The voluntary aspects of such programs may enhance their political feasibility. The all-day schools would probably increase educational expenses for a typical school district by one-fifth. On the other hand, if such a policy could be coordinated with Title 20 day care programs, the cost would be lower.

The possibility of desegregating schools by linking student assignment to parents' place of work is remote, but intuitively attractive since work places are invariably more desegregated than residential areas. Moreover, parents may feel more secure in sending their children to desegregated schools

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may be there cannot be removed by this method because all variables which affect achievement also affect the selection of private schools. Hence, the analysis cannot prove anything except that private school students have higher achievement than public school students. They may have always had higher achievement. Virtually all commentaries on the report have made this point, as well as other points of disagreement. For a sample of these, see Rossell (1981b) and Crain and Hawley (1982).

if the schools are nearby. In addition, parental involvement might be more easily achieved since many schools would be more accessible if desegregated by workplace rather than by neighborhood.

The economic feasibility of this proposal cannot be easily assessed from existing data, although it does seem possible to do such an analysis in principle. Combining existing data sets may provide some clues. One attractive aspect of this suggestion is the possibility of energy cost savings to families and school districts since parents and children would commute together rather than separately as they do now. Indeed, parents might ride school buses to help defray public school transportation costs and to monitor student behavior.

While this option would seem to require federal or state support to achieve inter-district student attendance, school districts themselves could pursue this with schools districts which are underenrolled.

The Cost of White Flight

Most of the policy options discussed here follow from the assumption that it is desirable and worth considerable expense to retain whites in desegregating cities and school systems. That assumption is very troublesome to some non-whites. For this and other reasons, it deserves further examination, especially when a number of efforts to stem white flight may mean that some schools will remain segregated and that minorities will be required to accept a greater share of the busing burden.

The cost of white flight in terms of reduction in interracial contact can easily be estimated (see Rossell, 1978a; Coleman, et al., 1975). Mandatory desegregation plans, in school districts above 35% black, have a greater net benefit (i.e., more interracial contact opportunities) than voluntary plans, both in the short term and the long term, despite the fact that they

have greater implementation year white flight. For every 20% of the district's blacks who are reassigned, there is likely to be a 12 percentage point increase in interracial contact. For every 20% of whites who are reassigned, a 10 percentage point increase in interracial contact is likely to occur (Rossell, 1978a). This increased interracial contact lasts for at least a decade or more, although during this time period the level of interracial contact will decline as long as the white proportion of enrollment is declining. If there is a one percentage point decline in the proportion white every year (as part of the long-term secular trend) and all the schools are racially balanced, a half percentage point decline in the level of interracial contact can be expected. This will occur in all school districts whether they are desegregated or not, but the desegregated school districts should always have greater levels of interracial contact since they started out much higher. (The one known exception is Los Angeles, noted earlied, analyzed in Ross, 1981.)

Although there is a net benefit from mandatory, extensive desegregation plans in terms of increased interracial contact, it is not clear what the effect of such plans are on the socioeconomic composition of the student or community population. The research evidence indicates that those most likely to withdraw their children from desegregated schools are those with higher income and higher education (Giles, et al., 1976; McConahay & Hawley, 1977; Pride & Woodward, 1978; Lord, 1975; Rossell, 1980; Clotfelter, 1981). This is a problem since the research suggests that school desegregation produces greater achievement gains for lower socioeconomic status students when the socioeconomic level of their classmates is higher. Furthermore, there is little evidence regarding the effects of white flight on the community property tax base or citizen support for public schools. The long-term implications of these possible negative impacts for the quality of desegregated

education is uncertain.

In short, while there are ways to think more systematically about the issue, there is no empirical way to assess the costs of white flight to a school system or a community. What is involved is a question of values and, as white flight continues, the values that whites and minorities consider important may change. Some observers believe, for example, that the waning of minority support for desegregation in some areas is linked to the increased electoral power minorities have when whites leave the cities.

Conclusion

We have summarized the existing research on white flight and concluded both that desegregation does not always and inevitably lead to long-term changes in the racial composition of communities, and that we know a fair amount about the conditions which affect its magnitude. Further research will no doubt clarify several issues that we now inadequately understand. We have also argued that there appear to be a number of initiatives that could be taken at all levels of government to reduce the exodus of white and middle class students from the public schools. There is no solid evidence that these proposals will achieve substantial reductions in white flight. However, the evidence presented here and the theory we articulated suggest that these alternatives would probably be effective in some unknown measure. Many of the proposals have potential benefits beyond their effects on white flight. To be sure, the proposals outlined here may seem quixotic in a time when the federal government is in rapid retreat from its active support of desegregation. Nevertheless, hundreds of school systems are, and will continue to be, involved in desegregation and millions of students go to schools whose enrollment patterns are influenced by desegregation plans. The Constitution will stand and courts will continue to insist that intentional

segregation be remedied. In short, the problem--and the opportunity--will be part of American education for the foreseeable future. It is time to begin to find new ways to address continuing problems.

We are also aware, however, that it is much easier to think of policy options than it is to implement them, particularly in a political arena characterized by intense ideological conflict and diverse federal, state, and local linkages. What we have tried to do here is to shift from the usually recommended negative sanctions for achieving desegregation to positive incentives for 1) minimizing negative effects of school desegregation among school districts already forced to comply with a court order, and 2) achieve greater school desegregation at less costs for those school districts who wish to avoid a future court-ordered plan. The threat of a court order is a very real negative sanction which may serve as a stimulus for federal, state, and local policy makers to adopt some of the proposals we have suggested here and perhaps even to comply with them.

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